

2.7 Land Use and Planning

This section addresses existing land uses in the County of San Diego (County) and identifies the potential impacts of the proposed project to on-site and surrounding land uses. This section discusses and analyzes potential land use conflicts of the proposed project in relation to the physical division of an existing community as well as existing land use plans, policies, and regulations. The discussion of existing land uses and land use policies and regulations is based on the County of San Diego General Plan (County of San Diego 2011a, Land Use Element).

2.7.1 Existing Conditions

Existing Land Use Types

There are a variety of land uses existing in the unincorporated communities of the County. Land use types are mainly classified into seven categories: Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Facilities, Circulation/Transportation, Open Space, and Tribal Lands. These land use types are based on existing development patterns from various sources, including aerial photos and building permits.

Regional Land Use Setting

The unincorporated portion of the County is located in the southwestern corner of California and encompasses approximately 2.3 million acres. It is bordered by Riverside and Orange Counties to the north, Imperial County to the east, the country of Mexico to the south, and 18 local incorporated jurisdictions and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The incorporated cities within the County include the following (listed from north to south): the Cities of Oceanside, Vista, Carlsbad, San Marcos, Escondido, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar, Poway, Santee, El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Chula Vista, Imperial Beach, Coronado, and San Diego. The unincorporated portion of the region is divided into 23 planning areas. In all, 14 of the planning areas are community planning areas (CPAs) and 9 are subregions.

The common characteristics of the land, from topography to public services, work to dictate what development patterns are most appropriate for particular portions of the San Diego region. On average, the unincorporated areas of the County are more highly constrained, with more rugged terrain, more occurrences of sensitive species, and less opportunities to provide essential services. Due to these constraints, the unincorporated areas generally have a different ratio of land uses than the incorporated cities. A majority of the land in the unincorporated County is open space or undeveloped, while the majority of land in the incorporated cities is developed. Land uses identified in the existing General Plan for the unincorporated County are shown in Figure 2.7-1, and Table 2.7-1 provides regional land use distribution totals. Within the developed land areas of the unincorporated County, residential and transportation/circulation uses are the

predominant land uses. In addition, several large federal, state, and regional parklands encompass much of the unincorporated County, especially the eastern portion.

The most developed communities in the unincorporated County are located along its western boundary and include the CPAs of Spring Valley, Valle de Oro, Lakeside, Ramona, and San Dieguito, as well as the North County Metro Subregion. These areas, located primarily within the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) boundary, have generally been provided with public facilities and services, such as water, sewer, roads, and schools, before other areas of the unincorporated County and therefore have been able to sustain growth at a more rapid rate. Because public facilities and services are more difficult and costly to construct and provide further to the east, development has been sparse in the backcountry region. The SDCWA is the public agency responsible for the administration of the region's Colorado River rights. The SDCWA sells water to 24 municipal water departments and water districts (member agencies), which in turn deliver the water to individual homes and businesses throughout western San Diego County.

2.7.2 Regulatory Setting

The County has numerous policies, programs, codes, and ordinances that regulate land use development. In order to simplify the volume and complexity of these regulations, this inventory focuses on policies that affect land use designations and zoning. Policies and regulations that indirectly affect land use planning, such as traffic, water quality, and air quality regulations, are included in the other appropriate sections of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

State Regulations

California Aeronautics Act

The California Aeronautics Act, established by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) – Division of Aeronautics, requires the preparation of airport land use compatibility plans (ALUCPs). ALUCPs promote compatibility between airports and the land uses that surround them to the extent that these uses are not already developed with incompatible land uses. They are intended to protect the safety of people, property, and aircraft on the ground and in the air in the vicinity of the airport. They also protect airports from encroachment by new incompatible land uses that could restrict their operations. In late 2006, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority adopted new ALUCPs for six rural airports operated by the County (Agua Caliente, Borrego Valley, Fallbrook, Jacumba, Ocotillo, and Ramona).

California Planning and Zoning Law

The legal framework in which California cities and counties exercise local planning and land use functions is provided in the California Planning and Zoning Law, Sections 65000 through 66499.58. Under state planning law, each city and county must adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan. State law gives cities and counties wide latitude in how a jurisdiction may create a general plan, but there are fundamental requirements that must be met. These requirements include the inclusion of seven mandatory elements described in the California Government Code. Each of the elements must contain text and descriptions setting forth objectives, principles, standards, policies, and plan proposals; diagrams and maps that incorporate data and analysis; and mitigation measures.

California Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidelines

To assist local governments in meeting general plan requirements, the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is required to adopt and periodically revise guidelines for the preparation and content of general plans (California Government Code, Section 65040.2). These are advisory guidelines, not mandated requirements, and serve as a reference tool for cities and counties in the preparation of local general plans. The guidelines include information on the required contents of a general plan, sustainable development and environmental justice, formatting, public participation, and implementation. The most recent version of the OPR General Plan Guidelines was prepared in 2003. OPR is currently in the process of preparing an updated version of the guidelines.

Local Agency Formation Commission

California Government Code, Section 56000 et seq., titled the Cortese-Knox-Hertberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, provides the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) with its powers, procedures, and functions. This law gives LAFCO power to “approve or, disapprove with or without amendment, wholly, partially or conditionally” proposals concerning the formation of cities and special districts, as well as other changes in jurisdiction or organization of local governmental agencies. LAFCO regulates local agency boundary changes including annexation and detachment of territory, incorporation of cities, formation of special districts, and consolidation, merger, and dissolution of districts. LAFCO is also charged with developing and updating a sphere of influence (SOI) for each city and special district within the County.

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 discourages urban sprawl and encourages orderly and efficient provision of services, such as water, sewer, and fire protection. As a result, San Diego LAFCO, a state-mandated agency with countywide regulatory authority, independent of County government, completed the North County Inland Municipal

Service Review (MSR) and SOI Update Study in September 2003 (LAFCO 2003). This study analyzes the proposed and recommended spheres for the affected local agencies, identifies the relevant service review determinations, and focuses on the expansion of the Escondido SOI to the southeast, retention of Escondido's SOI in the west and north, and updates to the Valley Center Municipal Water District and Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District SOI.

Other MSR and SOI Updates completed since 2003 include the following:

- Borrego Valley – contains a review of the provision of municipal services and the status of adopted SOIs of the local governmental agencies in the Borrego Valley study area
- County Sanitation Districts – assesses the adequacy of public services in a specific geographic region
- Southern San Diego County Water and Sewer Service – evaluates the status of the region's current water and sewer service systems and assesses the region's potential to efficiently meet future demands
- Agencies Providing Floodwater and Sewage Control, Waterworks Construction, and Groundwater Management, Protection, and Exploration in the Tijuana Watershed

Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991

The Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act is designed to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem scale while accommodating compatible land uses. The California Department of Fish and Game is the principal state agency implementing the NCCP Program. The act established a process to allow for comprehensive, regional multispecies planning in a manner that satisfies the requirements of the California Endangered Species Act and federal Endangered Species Act (through a companion regional HCP). The NCCP program has provided the framework for the state governments, local governments, and private interests to plan for the protection of regional biodiversity and ecosystems. NCCPs seek to ensure the long-term conservation of multiple species, while allowing for compatible and appropriate economic activity to proceed.

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill (SB) 375 was adopted in September 2008. SB 375 requires metropolitan planning organizations to develop a Sustainable Communities Strategy to include in their regional transportation plans for the purposes of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The purpose of the bill is to align planning for transportation and housing, and it creates specified incentives for the implementation of the strategy. The bill consists of five aspects: (1) creation of regional targets for greenhouse gas emissions reduction tied to land use; (2) a requirement that regional planning

agencies create a Sustainable Communities Strategy to meet those targets, even if that plan is in conflict with local plans; (3) a requirement that regional transportation funding decisions be consistent with this new plan; (4) a requirement that the Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers must conform to the Sustainable Communities Strategy; and (5) new California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exemptions and streamlining for projects that conform to the Sustainable Communities Strategy (Fulton 2008).

Local Regulations and Programs

San Diego Association of Governments Plans and Programs

Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP)

The RCP is prepared by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to be the strategic planning framework for the San Diego region. It creates a regional vision and provides a broad context in which local and regional decisions can be made that foster a healthy environment, a vibrant economy, and a high quality of life for all residents. The RCP balances regional population, housing, and employment growth with habitat preservation, agriculture, open space, and infrastructure needs. The RCP considers the general plans of all the jurisdictions in the region, examines regional growth patterns, and provides a blueprint for growth in San Diego, including where and how growth would occur.

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The RTP, also known as MOBILITY 2030, serves as a blueprint to address the mobility challenges created by the San Diego region's growing population and employment. It contains an integrated set of public policies, strategies, and investments to maintain, manage, and improve the transportation system in the region. The 2030 RTP was approved on March 28, 2003. Changes in anticipated cost and revenue have resulted in an update of the RTP that was approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors in 2006. Additional updates and approvals were obtained in late 2007, to incorporate a new regional growth forecast, strategic initiatives, and several other white papers on topics not previously covered in the RTP.

Congestion Management Program (CMP)

State Proposition 111, passed by voters in 1990, established a requirement that urbanized areas prepare and regularly update a CMP, which is a part of SANDAG's RTP. The purpose of the CMP is to monitor the performance of the region's transportation system, develop programs to address near-term and long-term congestion, and better integrate transportation and land use planning. SANDAG, as the designated Congestion Management Agency for the San Diego region, must develop, adopt, and update the CMP in response to specific legislative

requirements. SANDAG, local jurisdictions, and transportation operators such as Caltrans, Metropolitan Transit Development Board, and North County Transit District are responsible for implementing and monitoring the CMP.

County of San Diego Plans, Programs, Policies, and Regulations

Community and Subregional Plans

Each planning area has a community or subregional plan, except for Pendleton/De Luz and County Islands, which are CPAs without organized planning or sponsor groups. Each community plan or subregional plan supplements the County General Plan by focusing on a particular planning area. Community and subregional plans contain information and policies concerning land use, housing, circulation, conservation, public facilities and services, recreation, and community character. Other issues may be addressed depending on the circumstances in a particular community. The policies and programs contained in a community or subregional plan are meant to refine the policies of the General Plan since they apply to a smaller geographic region and provide a forum for resolving local conflicts. As legally required by state law, community plans must be internally consistent with General Plan goals and policies of which they are a part.

The project includes a General Plan Amendment (GPA) intended to accomplish the following: (1) modify the Boulevard chapter of the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan (Boulevard Community Plan) to allow large wind turbine projects through the Major Use Permit process; and (2) allow small wind turbine projects in the Borrego Springs Community Plan, but continue to prohibit large wind turbines in areas where viewsheds would be adversely impacted. The GPA is included as Appendix B of this EIR. The text in Appendix B is presented in ~~strikeout~~ and/or underline text to indicate deleted or proposed new language, respectively. Current community plan and subregional plan policies or language relating to renewable energy and/or wind turbines, which in turn are directly related to the proposed project, are listed as follows (County of San Diego 2011a):

Alpine Community Plan: *Conservation Policy 24:* Promote the use of alternate and renewable, non-polluting energy system. [AP, PP] (p. 33)

Borrego Springs Community Plan:

Policy-LU 2.7.1: Require all proposed energy-generation (wind and solar) uses to fully assess community-wide impacts to environmental resources, community character and economic resources to the CPA. (p. 31)

Policy-LU-3.10.1: Require, to the maximum extent feasible, prior to issuing a certificate of occupancy for any new residential construction or reconstruction in the CPA, that all swimming pool equipment, HVAC equipment, propane equipment, satellite dishes, wind turbines, security lighting, electrical power lines, cable and telephone hook-ups and similar adjunct facilities be suitably planned, sited and enclosed so as to minimize visual blight and noise trespass onto adjoining parcel. (pp. 38–39)

Policy-COS 1.3.3: Prohibit wind turbine power generation towers in areas where viewsheds would be adversely impacted. (p. 62)

Central Mountain Subregional Plan: Public utility infrastructure must serve community needs. Unreliability of electrical power due to unplanned or planned utility outages during wind events do not contribute to the vitality of the sub-region. . . . Photovoltaic power, solar power and alternative energy sources must be also explored and encouraged to help meet local power needs. (p. 48)

Crest/Dehesa/Harbison Canyon/Granite Hills Community Plan: *Issue COS 1.5:* Current technology, knowledge, and materials are available that are capable of significantly reducing home energy use. Utilizing such technology and material as passive solar heating, active solar water and pool heating, photovoltaic, and wind turbines can aid in reducing reliance on electrical or natural gas sources. (p. 29)

North Mountain Subregional Plan (Greater Warner Springs):

Policy LU 5.2.1: Encourage energy generation as a preferred option for green building, including solar and residential scale wind generation. (p. 13)

Policy S 2.1.1: Encourage development of emergency communication infrastructure, including the use of alternative energy so that communication can be powered at user-site, thereby being independent from faraway energy sources that may have failed. (p. 20)

Ramona Community Plan: [T]he use of local energy resources from the sun and wind are encouraged in the Ramona Community Plan, as an alternative to depend on, and further incremental depletion of, regional supplies. (p. 9)

San Dieguito Community Plan: Energy Goal: Ensure maximum conservation practices and maximum development of alternative sources of energy. (p. 70)

San Dieguito Community Plan (Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove): *Policy CM-10.7.1:* Encourage new and existing residents to explore alternative sources of energy. (p. 43)

Mountain Empire Subregional Plan (Boulevard Community Plan): Policy CM 8.6.2: Encourage the use of solar and residential scale wind turbines, while discouraging new energy corridors for new transmission lines and fuel pipelines in fire prone and groundwater dependent areas. (p. 31)

Mountain Empire Subregional Plan (Potrero Community Plan):

Policy CM-8.3.1: Discourage the location of overhead electricity transmission lines and solar or wind farms. (p. 27)

Policy CM-8.3.2: Promote increases in the amount of energy produced through locally available energy sources only when the resulting technological design approach is consistent with Potrero's rural character and scenic qualities. (p. 27)

Policy COS-1.8.2: Promote the use of small-scale advanced and renewable energy technology by encouraging the use of renewable resources in residential, commercial, and agricultural projects and uses. (p. 36)

Specific Plans

Specific plans provide an alternative to the Zoning Ordinance in that they are customized plans that delineate land uses, infrastructure, development standards and criteria, and mitigation measures for specific land areas. Specific plans must be consistent with the General Plan, and can be used to implement the General Plan within a limited area.

Forest Conservation Initiative

The Cleveland National Forest is one of the largest expanses of undisturbed, natural open space in Southern California and as such is valuable as a watershed, agricultural area, and recreational area for citizens of the County. The unique resources of the Cleveland National Forest are of such significance that development on parcels within its boundaries must be restricted. Recognizing the need for continued growth and adequate housing in the County, voters approved the Forest Conservation Initiative (FCI), which required that approximately 70,000 acres of private lands within the Cleveland National Forest in the County have a minimum lot size of 40 acres. The FCI was originally approved in 1993 and expired on December 31, 2010. Upon the expiration of the FCI, land in the affected areas reverted to the land use designations under the pre-FCI General Plan. The General Plan Update land use map changes excluded FCI lands; therefore, the pre-FCI General Plan land use designations applied to the former FCI lands are not consistent with the General Plan Update. To correct these inconsistencies, the County Department of Planning and Land Use is undertaking planning efforts to appropriately re-designate these lands.

San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program

The Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a long-term regional conservation plan designed to establish a connected preserve system that ensures the long-term survival of sensitive plant and animal species and protects the native vegetation found throughout the County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, and species endangerment and creates a plan to mitigate for the potential loss of sensitive species and their habitats. The MSCP covers 582,243 acres over 12 jurisdictions, as shown in Figure 2.1-2. Individual jurisdictions can prepare Subarea Plans to implement the MSCP within its boundaries. The County has one Subarea Plan under this program, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 22, 1997. This Subarea Plan covers 252,132 acres in the southwestern portion of the unincorporated area. In addition to the Subarea Plan itself, the Biological Mitigation Ordinance (adopted March 1998) and the Implementing Agreement between the County and wildlife agencies (signed March 1998) are the documents used to implement the South County MSCP. The County is currently developing new Subregional Plans for North County and East County.

San Diego County Zoning Ordinance

The County Zoning Ordinance provides detailed regulatory provisions for development of all unincorporated lands within the County. County zoning is used to implement the goals and objectives of the adopted General Plan in accordance with state law, which requires that the General Plan and corresponding zoning be consistent with one another.

San Diego County General Plan

The General Plan document, dated August 2011, is the first comprehensive update of the County General Plan since 1978. The document is based on a set of guiding principles designed to protect the County's unique and diverse natural resources and maintain the character of its rural and semi-rural communities. It reflects an environmentally sustainable approach to planning that balances the need for adequate infrastructure, housing, and economic vitality, while maintaining and preserving each unique community within the County, agricultural areas, and extensive open space.

The General Plan contains six elements. The Land Use Element, Chapter 3, provides maps, goals, and policies that guide planners, the general public, property owners, developers, and decision makers as to how lands are to be conserved and developed in the unincorporated County. The Land Use Element includes a two-tier framework to guide the location and distribution of land uses, and to establish the range and intensity of allowable land uses for all areas under the County's jurisdiction. The first tier, Regional Categories, establishes a hierarchy

for the overall structure and organization of development that differentiates areas by overall character and density. The second tier, Land Use Designations, disaggregates these categories and provides more precise direction regarding the planned density and intensity of residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and public land uses. The Mobility Element, Chapter 4, identifies the general location and extent of existing and proposed major roads, transportation routes, terminals, and other public utilities and facilities. The Conservation and Open Space Element, Chapter 5, addresses the conservation, development, and use of natural resources including water, forests, soils, rivers, mineral deposits, and open space. This Element encourages renewable energy production. The Housing Element, Chapter 6, is a comprehensive assessment of current and projected housing needs for all economic segments of the community and region. It sets forth local housing policies and programs to implement those policies. The Safety Element, Chapter 7, establishes policies and programs to protect the community from risks associated with seismic, geologic, flood, and wildfire hazards. Lastly, the Noise Element, Chapter 8, identifies and appraises noise problems within the community and forms the basis for distributing new noise-sensitive land uses.

San Diego County Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS)

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (APCD) and SANDAG are responsible for developing and implementing the clean air plan for attainment and maintenance of the air quality in the SDAB. As part of this responsibility, the APCD has created a strategy that lays out a program for attaining the standards for ozone. The strategy, called the RAQS, outlines APCD's plans and control measures specifically designed to attain the California Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone. The RAQS, initially adopted in 1991, was updated in 1995, 1998, 2001, and most recently in 2004 on a triennial basis. The APCD is in the process of updating the RAQS for 2007.

San Diego Basin Plan

The Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin (Basin Plan), most recently amended in 2007, sets forth water quality objectives for constituents that could potentially cause an adverse effect or impact on the beneficial uses of water. Specifically, the Basin Plan is designed to accomplish the following: (1) designate beneficial uses for surface and ground waters; (2) set the narrative and numerical objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's anti-degradation policy; (3) describe mitigation measures to protect the beneficial uses of all waters within the region; and (4) describe surveillance and monitoring activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the Basin Plan. The Basin Plan incorporates by reference all applicable State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Board plans and policies.

2.7.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination of Significance

The proposed project consists of amendments to the Zoning Ordinance related to wind turbines and temporary Meteorological Testing (MET) facilities. Under the proposed project, large turbines will continue to require approval of a Major Use Permit while a small wind turbine or MET facility meeting the height designator of the zone in which it is located would be allowed without discretionary review. The impact analysis below has been separated into “Small Turbine(s)/MET Facilities” and “Large Turbine(s)” to reflect the distinction in the level of review required for the establishment of each use (discretionary vs. non-discretionary).

2.7.3.1 *Physically Divide a Community*

Guidelines for Determination of Significance

For the purpose of this EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines applies to the direct and indirect impact analysis, as well as the cumulative impact analysis. A significant impact would result if:

- The proposed project would physically divide an established community.

Analysis

For the purposes of this EIR, established communities are defined as established town centers or communities within the County’s 23 planning areas. The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment applies to the entire unincorporated County with regard to small turbines and to a significant portion of the unincorporated County with regard to large turbines (see Project Description, Section 1.2); therefore, it includes all of the established communities within the County.

Small Turbine(s)/MET Facilities

The proposed project would allow for the introduction of new infrastructure to areas within the County. However, the proposed project would not significantly disrupt or divide an established community since small wind turbines and temporary MET facilities will be located in concert with existing residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses. Future small wind turbines and MET facilities could potentially require the development or improvement of access roads. However, small wind turbines and MET facilities are allowed as an accessory use; new or improved access roads would be contained within properties and would be private roads that would not bisect communities or town centers. Therefore, the project would not significantly disrupt or divide an established community or create land uses that are clearly incompatible with existing and planned surrounding land uses. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Large Turbine(s)

The proposed project amends certain provisions of the County's Zoning Ordinance related to large turbines. These updates are necessary to address advancements in technology that have obviated many of the current provisions. The proposed amendments related to large wind turbines consist of updated definitions and requirements related to setbacks, noise, height, and locations where large turbines are permissible. All future large turbine projects will be subject to discretionary review and required to obtain a Major Use Permit. As part of the County's discretionary review process, projects would be evaluated under CEQA and would be required to implement measures to minimize land use impacts, as necessary. CEQA requires proposed projects to provide detailed information on the potentially significant environmental effects they are likely to have, list ways in which the significant environmental effects would be minimized, and identify alternatives that would reduce or avoid the significant impacts identified for the project.

Future large wind turbines are not expected to result in the physical division of an established community through placement of a railroad, airport, or large open space area. However, future large wind turbines may require road improvements for access during both construction and maintenance activities. If road improvements are required, they would be constructed according to the County's Zoning Ordinance Sections 6750–6799, San Diego County Public Road Standards, and San Diego County Private Road Standards. Associated road improvements would also be subject to CEQA review to analyze and mitigate impacts, such as the potential to divide an established community. However, as there is ultimately no guarantee on a project-specific level that mitigation measures will reduce impacts to a level below significant, the proposed project may result in significant impacts due to road improvements for future large wind turbines that could physically divide an established community (**LU-1**).

2.7.3.2 *Conflict with Plans, Policies, and Regulations*

Guidelines for Determination of Significance

For the purpose of this EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines applies to the direct and indirect impact analysis, as well as the cumulative impact analysis. A significant impact would result if:

- The proposed project directly conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (e.g., General Plan; Community or Subregional Plans; and the Zoning Ordinance), adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Analysis

The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment applies to the entire unincorporated County with regards to small turbines and to a significant portion of the unincorporated County with regard to large turbines (see Project Description, Section 1.2); therefore, it includes all of the established communities within the County and would need to be consistent with the County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and all community or subregional plans. The unincorporated County is addressed in regional planning documents including the RCP, RTP, CMP, and San Diego Basin plans, and therefore the proposed project would also need to be consistent with these plans.

Small Turbine(s)/MET Facilities

County General Plan

The General Plan contains six planning elements including goals and policies for each. The proposed project is for a Zoning Ordinance amendment that would allow future small wind turbines and MET facilities as an accessory use in all zones and land use designations. The project is consistent with the General Plan policies to promote the use of renewable energy within the County. The Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy section of the General Plan's Conservation and Open Space Element contains specific policies related to the proposed project, as follows (County of San Diego 2011a):

Policy COS-14.7 Alternative Energy Sources for Development Projects. Encourage development projects that use energy recovery, photovoltaic, and wind energy. (p. 5-35)

Policy COS-6.5 Best Management Practices. Encourage best management practices in agriculture and animal operations to protect watersheds, reduce GHG emissions, conserve energy and water, and utilize alternative energy sources, including wind and solar power. (p. 5-16)

The General Plan also includes goals and policies to preserve ridgelines and hillsides, as follows:

Policy COS-12.1 Hillside and Ridgeline Development Density. Protect undeveloped ridgelines and steep hillsides by maintaining semi-rural or rural designations on these areas. (p. 5-30)

Policy COS-12.2 Development Location on Ridges. Require development to preserve the physical features by being located down and away from ridgelines so that structures are not silhouetted against the sky. (p. 5-30)

The Zoning Ordinance amendment includes a provision to prohibit the development of small wind turbines on ridgelines. In addition, the proposed project does not involve the development of dwelling units as it relates to density. Small wind turbines and MET facilities are accessory uses and will not impact steep hillside and ridgeline development density. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the above policies.

Community Plans and Subregional Plans

Community and subregional plans are adopted as a part of the General Plan and thus are consistent with its components and would only be amended as part of a GPA. As described in Section 2.7.2, the proposed project includes a GPA that would allow small wind turbines in the Borrego Springs community. The GPA is intended to clarify that large wind turbines are still prohibited in order to protect Montezuma Valley Road (S22), an important scenic resource, but to allow for the development of small wind turbines except as prohibited on ridgelines by the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments. The GPA would help to achieve many of the goals and policies in support of renewable energy in the General Plan and community plans. The Potrero chapter of the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan, for example, promotes the use of small-scale advanced and renewable energy technology by encouraging the use of renewable resources in residential, commercial, and agricultural projects and uses. Small wind turbines and MET facilities would not conflict with community or subregional plans.

Zoning Ordinance

The project proposes a Zoning Ordinance amendment that would be adopted by the Board of Supervisors. The amendments consist of clarifications, deletions, and revisions to provide an updated set of definitions, procedures, and standards for review and permitting of wind turbines and MET facilities. The proposed project includes allowing a temporary MET facility that complies with the height designator of the zone to be permitted without an administrative permit. The proposed project also includes the allowance of small wind turbines, which meet the definition and specifications of the Zoning Ordinance, to be developed without discretionary review, meaning that so long as they meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, no individual land use permits would be required. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.

Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP)

The RCP document was not designed as a regulatory plan, but rather as a guidance plan. SANDAG suggests that agencies incorporate the recommendations of the RCP into their local and regional plans, but it is not required that they comply with the recommendations. The County's General Plan considered the RCP goals and implemented them to the extent feasible.

Because the proposed project complies with the General Plan, it is also consistent with the goals of the RCP.

Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The RTP serves as a blueprint to address the mobility challenges created by the San Diego region's growing population and employment. It contains an integrated set of public policies, strategies, and investments to maintain, manage, and improve the transportation system in the region, and it requires that jurisdictions incorporate the planned highway network identified in the RTP into their general plans. Small wind turbines and MET facilities would not conflict with the General Plan's Mobility Element, nor would they result in transportation or traffic impacts; refer to Section 2.8, Transportation and Traffic, for details. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the RTP.

Congestion Management Program (CMP)

The CMP is a part of SANDAG's RTP. The purpose of the CMP is to monitor the performance of the region's transportation system, develop programs to address near-term and long-term congestion, and better integrate transportation and land use planning. Small wind turbines and MET facilities would not conflict with the General Plan's Mobility Element, nor would they result in transportation or traffic impacts; refer to Section 2.8 for details. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the RTP or CMP.

San Diego Basin Plan (Basin Plan)

The Basin Plan sets forth water quality objectives in order to maintain the beneficial uses of water within the County. The development of small wind turbines and MET facilities would have the potential to impact water quality and would be subject to the programs and regulations of the Basin Plan. Future projects would also be required to implement techniques, such as low-impact development techniques, to minimize impacts to water quality. Therefore, future small wind turbines and MET facilities would not conflict with the Basin Plan.

Because future small wind turbines and MET facilities will comply with the above-referenced policies and plans, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact due to conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of an agency with jurisdiction over the project; impacts would be **less than significant**.

Large Turbine(s)

The proposed project amends certain provisions of the County's Zoning Ordinance related to large turbines. These updates are necessary in order to address advancements in technology that

have obviated many of the current provisions. The proposed amendments related to large wind turbines consist of updated definitions and requirements related to setbacks, noise, height, and locations where large turbines are permissible. All future large turbine projects will be subject to discretionary review and required to obtain a Major Use Permit. As part of the County's discretionary review process, all future projects would be evaluated under CEQA and would be required to implement measures to minimize land use impacts, as necessary. CEQA requires proposed projects to provide detailed information on the potentially significant environmental effects they are likely to have, list ways in which the significant environmental effects would be minimized, and identify alternatives that would reduce or avoid the significant impacts identified for the project. Additionally, large wind turbine projects would be reviewed for their consistency with applicable land use plans and must comply or they would not be approved.

As described in Section 2.7.2, the proposed project includes a GPA to modify policies within the Boulevard Community Plan such that it would allow for more flexible permitting of large wind turbine projects through the Major Use Permit process. The more flexible permitting would allow large wind turbines to be developed in areas with some of the most wind resource potential, while still adhering to the goals and policies of the community and ensuring that any impacts related to land use are mitigated to the greatest extent possible. The GPA would also help to achieve many of the goals and policies in support of renewable energy in the General Plan and community plans.

The GPA also includes an amendment to the Borrego Springs Community Plan. The amendment would continue to prohibit large wind turbines in areas where viewsheds would be adversely impacted, but would allow small wind turbine projects except as prohibited on ridgelines by the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments. This revision maintains the intent of the policy, which is to protect Montezuma Valley Road (S22), an important scenic resource. Montezuma Valley Road (S22) is the only known area within the Borrego Springs community with wind resources sufficient to support large wind turbine projects.

All future large wind turbine projects would continue to be reviewed on an individual basis to ensure that they meet the goals and objectives of all applicable land use plans and policies. Because large wind turbines would not be approved unless they meet the goals and policies of applicable land use plans, the proposed project would result in **less-than-significant** impacts.

2.7.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis

The geographic scope of cumulative impact analysis for land use is the San Diego region, including jurisdictions and special districts within and adjacent to the unincorporated County.

2.7.4.1 *Physically Divide a Community*

Cumulative projects would include the construction of new or widened roads, airports, railroad tracks, open space areas, or other features that would have the potential to physically divide an established community. Future roadway development under the proposed General Plan Update would have the potential to result in new roadways or improvements that would physically divide an established community. Utility projects in the unincorporated area may also have fragmenting effects on communities within the County. Therefore, cumulative projects would have the potential to result in a cumulatively considerable impact associated with the physical division of an established community.

Small Turbine(s)/MET Facilities

As described in Section 2.7.3.1, small wind turbine or MET facility projects would not include the construction of new or widened major roadways, airports, railroad tracks, open space areas, or other features that would individually have the potential to physically divide an established community. Therefore, the development of small wind turbines and MET facilities under the proposed project **would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact**.

Large Turbine(s)

As described in Section 2.7.3.1, large wind turbines could potentially result in the construction of new or widened major roadways that would individually have the potential to physically divide an established community. Therefore, the development of large wind turbines under the proposed project could potentially result in a cumulatively considerable impact (**LU-2**).

2.7.4.2 *Conflict with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations*

Cumulative projects would have the potential to result in a cumulative impact if they would, in combination, conflict with existing land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. Cumulative projects in the San Diego region would utilize regional planning documents such as the RCP and RTP during planning, and the general plans of adjacent jurisdictions and counties would be consistent with the regional plans, to the extent that they are applicable. Cumulative projects in these jurisdictions would be required to comply with the applicable land use plan or they would not be approved. Projects in Mexico and on tribal lands would not be required to comply with state or local plans, policies, or regulations. However, they would be required to comply with applicable land use plans for these areas, to the extent that they exist.

Small Turbine(s)/MET Facilities

As described in Section 2.7.3.2, small wind turbines and MET facilities comply with all applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations and would not cause any conflicts with such plans. Therefore, small wind turbines and MET facilities developed under the proposed project **would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.**

Large Turbine(s)

As described in Section 2.7.3.2, the proposed project includes a GPA in order to allow for more flexible permitting of large wind turbine projects through the Major Use Permit process. The more flexible permitting would allow for large wind turbines to be developed in area with some of the most wind resource potential, while still adhering to the goals and policies of the community and ensuring that any impacts related to land use are mitigated to the greatest extent possible. The GPA would also help to achieve many of the goals and policies in support of renewable energy in the General Plan and community plans. All future large wind turbine projects would be reviewed on an individual basis and would be required to comply with all applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations and would not cause any conflicts with such plans. Therefore, small wind turbines and MET facilities developed under the proposed project **would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.**

2.7.5 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

The proposed project would result in potentially significant impacts associated with land use due to physical division of a community from the development of large wind turbines. The proposed project would not result in any land use impacts related to small wind turbines or MET facilities and would not result in any conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

2.7.6 Mitigation Measures

2.7.6.1 *Physically Divide a Community*

The proposed project would allow for the development of large wind turbines that could potentially physically divide an established community. Appropriate feasible and enforceable mitigation measures could not be identified that would reduce potential impacts. A discussion of infeasible mitigation measures is provided as follows.

Infeasible Mitigation Measures

The following measure was considered in attempting to reduce direct and cumulative impacts associated with the physical division of a community from future large wind turbines and

associated infrastructure to below a level of significance. However, it has been determined that this measure is infeasible for reasons described as follows. Therefore, this measure would not be implemented.

- Require future large wind turbine projects to avoid using project designs or project features (such as access roads) that would potentially divide an established community. The feasibility of this measure is uncertain as future large wind projects may be able to make findings that land use impacts do not outweigh the benefits of such projects.

As it cannot be concluded at this stage impacts associated with the physical division of a community from large wind turbines allowed with a Major Use Permit under the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment would be avoided or mitigated, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Chapter 4, Project Alternatives, provides a discussion of alternatives to the proposed project that would result in some reduced impacts associated with land use as compared to the proposed project.

2.7.6.2 *Conflict with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations*

The proposed project will not result in any significant impacts related to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations, and no mitigation measures are required.

2.7.7 Conclusion

The following discussion provides a synopsis of the conclusion reached in each of the impact analyses above, as well as the level of impact that would occur after mitigation measures are implemented.

Physically Divide a Community

Development of small wind turbines and temporary MET facilities pursuant to the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment would not physically divide an established community. The proposed project would allow for the development of large wind turbines that could directly or cumulatively result in physically dividing an established community. Feasible and enforceable mitigation measures that would reduce direct and cumulative impacts could not be identified. Therefore, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

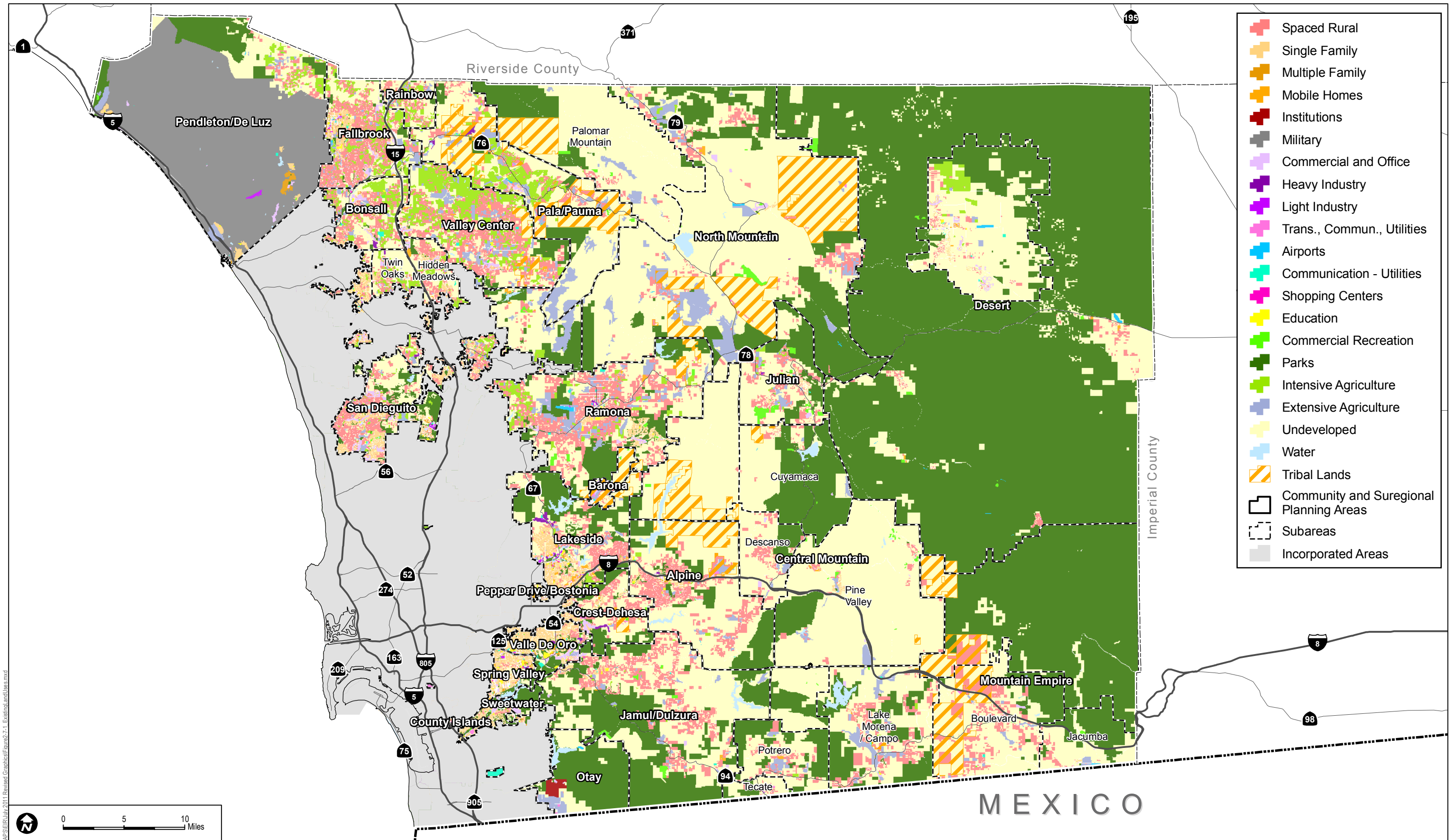
Conflict with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

The proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Table 2.7-1 San Diego County Land Distribution Totals

General Land Use	Acreage
Residential Total	108,714
Low Density	70,802
Single Family	33,022
Mobile Homes	1,924
Multiple Family	2,966
Commercial Total	7,355
Commercial and Office	1,416
Commercial Recreation	5,809
Shopping Centers	130
Industrial Total	2,553
Light Industrial	1,001
Heavy Industrial	0
Extractive Industrial	1,552
Facilities Total	5,486
Education	1,729
Communication—Utilities	1,768
Institutions	1,989
Circulation Total	42,915
Freeways/Roads	38,972
Miscellaneous Transportation	2,651
Junkyards, dumps, landfills	905
Airports	1,292
Open Space Total	1,004,253
Parks	839,034
Intensive Agriculture	165,219
Extensive Agriculture	0
Miscellaneous Totals	
Military	123,834
Undeveloped/Vacant	975,784
Water	11,287
Miscellaneous	1,906
Total	2,284,087

Source: County of San Diego 2011b, Section 2.9



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